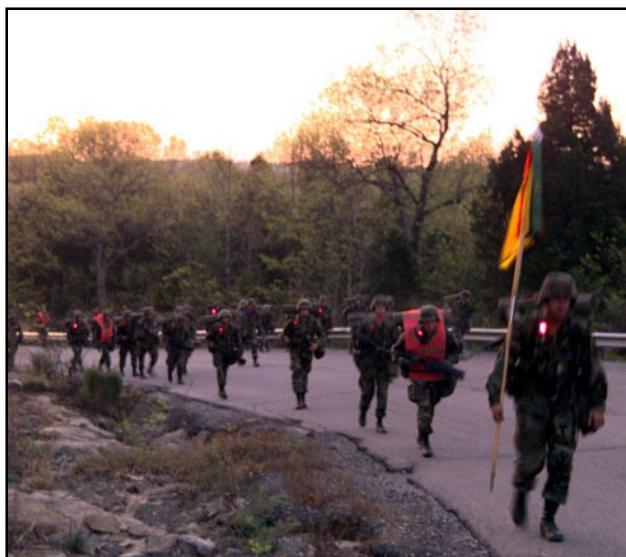




A Rite of Passage

At the End of a Long Journey, These Men Are Now Tankers

After spending six days and five nights in the field, where they practiced the theory they learned during OSUT training, E Company, 2-81 Armor, road marches 15 kilometers back to their battalion area for a ceremony that will welcome them into the Armor Force.



At the battalion parade field, new 19 Kilos form up to receive congratulations along with their new tanker brass, Army Service Ribbons, regimental crests, and Army Values tags. On their return to their barracks, each new trooper finds a brand new pair of tanker boots under his bunk. The ceremony reinforces the 81st's regimental history, which began at Fort Knox in 1941, before the unit shipped out to fight at Normandy and the European Theater.



Photos by Robert L. Stevenson



After receiving a range orientation and safety briefing by the Range Safety Officer, right, OSUT troopers mount their tanks for familiarization on the 120mm main gun and the tank's three machine guns.

